

BUILDING CODES

by Paul Rademacher

It was one of those moments when I wanted to crawl under a rock. Back in the days when I was a building contractor, my company was remodeling office space for one of my clients. Suddenly it became clear that I had misread the building code and my stomach felt like it dropped to my shoe tops. It meant that I would need to tear up the eight-inch-thick concrete floor and redo all the plumbing lines. There would be delays, but even more, it was going to cost me a bundle.

Red-faced with embarrassment, I went to my client's general manager to explain the mistake and to assure him I would make it right even though it was going to mean I would probably lose money on the job. He was a wise, older man who had seen more ups and downs in his business than he could count and had weathered them all.

After I was finished telling my tale, he put his arm around my shoulder and said, "Paul, . . ."—he paused to draw in a long breath—"I want you to remember . . . that we're in this together."

It was a moment of shimmering grace. He was not going to let me drown. In a rough-and-tumble business world that can often be coldly calculating, here was someone who understood the value of a different kind of building code: the code of building long-term relationships. I have never forgotten him or his perspective.

The notion that "we're in this together" is something I have felt time and again from all of you who have been so generous in your support of TMI. It is no secret that we have been navigating through exceptionally difficult economic times. Countless people have lost jobs, everyone seems to be cutting back on spending, businesses are shutting down, and nonprofits are closing their doors.

Yet through it all, TMI has managed not only to stay afloat, but to move forward in bold ways. In large part it is because so many of you see this work as being vitally important. To go through a program at TMI is to be touched in life-changing ways by Bob Monroe's gift to the world. It is also to feel a keen connection to this place and staff that can best be described as a sense of family.

Time and again you have communicated to me that we are all "in this together."

I hear it in the kind and supportive comments that you have made to me at lunchtimes when I visit with you during programs. It comes though in your e-mails and in your suggestions offered with obvious caring and concern. I see it in the numerous ways you volunteer your time. I feel it

in your generous responses to our scholarship fund and in your financial contributions that are so vital in insuring TMI's future. It is unmistakable as I travel and speak on behalf of the Institute when so many of you come out and support this effort to get the word out about what we do. It happens in the little things you do to tell others about this work and as you gently encourage them to investigate the wonders of the inner world for themselves. It is abundantly clear in your expressions of gratitude and as you tell me the stories of your lives that are unfolding in meaning and wonder. When you offer me grace for the times I have come up short, I feel it powerfully.

In each of these circumstances and in countless other ways, I feel your arm around my shoulder. I feel your support of the staff. I notice with awe your unselfish gifts of intention, care, and support.

We couldn't do this work without you. From all of us on staff, thank you for being there.

Best wishes,

Paul Rademacher

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